



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

September 12, 2022

Sarah Bleau, Middle Mile Program Director
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC, 20230

Re: Letter of Support for Connecticut Education Network's Proposal into the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

Dear Director Bleau:

The Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) is pleased to provide this letter of support for the proposal from the Connecticut Education Network (CEN) to secure funds through the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure (MM) grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to expand and enhance Connecticut's connectivity.

In 2021, Connecticut enacted Public Act 21-159, An Act Concerning Equitable Access to Broadband, which implemented a statewide goal of universal access to broadband. Additionally, it is the statutory responsibility of PURA per Conn. Gen. Stat. Sec. 16-247a to ensure availability of high-quality and affordable telecommunications services to all residents and businesses. CEN plays an important role in Connecticut's broadband landscape in offering a nondiscriminatory, open access, middle mile option to emerging last mile providers. Therefore, PURA is committed to supporting organizations like CEN, in pursuing grant-funded additional capacity to achieve Connecticut's overall connectivity goals, particularly in underserved or critical areas.

PURA understands that CEN's proposal will increase capacity and resiliency to support emerging last mile broadband providers, in addition to the support it will provide to the existing 650+ community anchor institutions connected to the network today. These 650+ entities represent education, research, healthcare, government, public safety, workforce development, and digital citizenry; and often provide emergency response, communication, shelters, and gathering space for local and national security events.

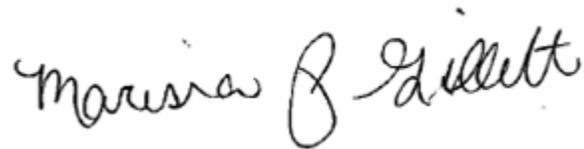
Furthermore, the changes proposed by CEN will also increase the number of resilient network paths and the network capacity, and they will reduce latency to the global Internet, to major cloud providers, and within the nationwide R&E interconnected infrastructure. Improved connectivity through CEN is important to the overall well-being

of the statewide broadband health, critical infrastructure, and the safety interests of the state.

Support provided by the federal government to CEN through the MM Infrastructure grant program is crucial to enabling these improvements and helping to ease the burden on customers and ratepayers. We look forward to working together to achieve these shared service objectives in Connecticut and further empower our state to build a healthy and prosperous broadband future for us all.

Sincerely,

PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marissa P. Gillett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Marissa P. Gillett
Chairman